

What carers in York have told us?

National Strategy refresh session – York 2010

25 people attended a consultation meeting on 16th August 2010.

16 were carers, of whom 4 were young carers. Three other carers returned written responses. Nine workers/professionals attended of whom all had specialist roles to support unpaid carers. Carers discussed what the priorities for services and support to carers should be.

KEY MESSAGES (from final discussion at meeting)

“Don’t let money rule it, sometimes have to spend a bit to create a lot.”

Do not cut services to carers. Carers save money, and are value for money. Protect the carers, and the cared for is protected.

“These services are our rights.”

Personalisation and respite is a complex issue.

Third sector equals value for money.

Short breaks are a priority.

Emergency support at short notice.

Development of personal budgets and support to maintain them.

Identification of carers in schools, GPs, hospital and hospital discharge.

Training by carers in carer awareness for professionals/workers.

Carers Allowance: increase and change the rules.

Young Carers need specialist support and support in schools and Further Education.

Carers own health.

Quotes from carers

Peer Support

“The only things that have worked well for me is when I have spoken to other carers....they were the ones who put me on to things that helped me. I would love to say “serviceland” helped me but I can’t.”

“Enabling parent/carers to speak to other parent/carers. People listen and learn best from people that know what they mean without having to explain.”

Health and Well-being

“One of the most important outcomes of the strategy. If the carer doesn’t have support and attention to their physical needs then there would be two people in need of care.”

“For me, the most important priority for the carer strategy is to ensure both the mental and physical well-being of the carer.....in the long term, funds targeted at ensuring carers are mentally and physically able to continue in their supporting roles will pay huge dividends by avoiding significant costs when things go wrong.”

“Emotional support for carers would be very welcome as it is badly needed. The only emotional support I have ever received in my caring role, has come from other carers. Funding carer led support groups should be a priority.”

Health Overview Scrutiny Report 2011

In November 2010 the City of York Council's Health Overview Scrutiny Committee set up a Task Group to carry out a Carer's Scrutiny Review.

Aim: to promote the valuable work done by carers and to improve the way City of York Council and its key partners identify carers and ensure they have access to information and the support available.

Key objectives:

- 1) To raise awareness of carers
- 2) To improve access to information for carers

20 carers and 10 care workers contributed information in person or via a questionnaire.

Analysis of information from the Public Event and questionnaires **The importance of early identification of carers**

Key professionals, especially GPs need to be aware of carers from an early stage and identify them as soon as possible.

Recognising you are a carer

People do not always immediately recognise themselves as a carer. Steps need to be taken to encourage early carer self-identification so that the right information can be provided at the right time. Carer needs to have access to information immediately that they recognise themselves as a carer.

“Many comments were received (at the public event and in returned questionnaires) that recognising that you are a carer was a gradual process, however it often became very clear at a point of crisis (such as hospital admission or diagnosis or a particular condition.)”

Provision of Information

Information would need to be proportionate to the needs of each individual carer.

Carers own needs

Comments at the public event were backed up by questionnaires that identified that frequently more support is given to patients/customers than to carers. This meant that the carer's health often suffered as a consequence and carer didn't always get enough time to spend on their own needs especially if they were caring for more than one person.

York LINK Report 2011

The LINK Steering Group held a Public Information and Awareness Event on Carers Rights on September 8th 2010. Evidence about services for carers in York was provided by a total of 48 individuals and York Carers Centre staff.

Recommendations from “Report on Carers Rights – March 2011” were made on the following themes:

Young Carers

- City of York Council to help fund York Carers Centre to promote young carers awareness in schools
- Implementation of a Young Carers Card Scheme and funding for York Carers Centre for a young carers event
- GPs should keep a record of young carers
- City of York Council provide support to help young carers to find ways of funding home computers

Employment

- City of York Council organise support and advice to help carers combat discrimination in the workplace
- Local organisations to offer work experiencing placements to carers

Parent carers

- City of York Council should improve access for disabled children to social services
- Jointly commissioned (by NHS North Yorkshire and York and City of York Council) posts to help parent carers liaise with community, social services and health services

City of York Council

- Congratulations to City of York Council for the amount of support provided for carers and carer organisations and request that high standards are maintained.

Carers Assessments

- Increased resources from City of York Council to reduce waiting times for Carers Assessments

GPs

- GP surgeries in York should adopt the model used in Somerset called the Carers Champions Scheme, with training delivered by York Carers Centre and York Carers Forum.

York Carers Centre Survey 2011

In January 2011 York Carers Centre sent out a survey to 650 adult carers registered on its database. In total 183 surveys were returned: a response rate of 28%. The following is a summary of feedback from carers.

To view the full survey results go to:

<http://www.yorkcarerscentre.co.uk/content/carers-survey-2011>

Current services

- 47% of carers heard about York Carers Centre from a social worker or carer support worker.
- 13% of carers heard about York Carers Centre from their GP surgery.
- 57% of carers responded that one of the reasons they initially contacted the Centre was to find information about services, and 42% to register for the Carers Emergency Card.
- 58% of carers usually contact the Centre by phone.
- 94% of carers felt able to speak to someone at the Centre at a convenient time.
- 95% of carers fed back very positively about all aspects of home visits from Centre workers.
- 88% of carers agreed that information in York Carers Centre newsletter was useful and relevant.
- 95% of carers felt that leaflets in the Carers Information Pack were useful and relevant.
- 79% of carers agreed that York Carers Centre helps them with the stresses of being a carer.

What carers would like to see in the future

- 80% of carers would like to have regular advice surgeries in their local area.
- 74% of carers felt it would be useful to have a telephone helpline for emotional support.